

31st Fighter Wing: The U.S. Air Force's fighter wing south of the Alps.

THE VIGILEER

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Aviano Air Base, Italy



Senior Airman Priscilla Robinson

Vice President Dick Cheney and his wife, Lynne Ann, step off of Air Force Two and onto the tarmac at Aviano during a rally held here Tuesday.

Cheney lauds Aviano troops

By 2nd Lt. Lea Ann Chambers
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Vice President Dick Cheney told service members and their dependents "you can be proud of the uniform you wear, the oath you've taken, and the code you live by every day," during a rally here Tuesday.

Cheney visited the U.S. Air Force's only fighter wing south of the Alps during his second trip to Europe as vice president. Cheney was greeted by a cheering crowd of almost 1,000 people in Hangar One.

Flanked by an Aviano Viper and an Army Blackhawk helicopter, Cheney addressed the large gathering.

"Just over a month ago, F-16s out of Aviano were overhead when our soldiers on the ground found Saddam Hussein in a hole. In Iraq, where a dictator cultivated

ties to terror and sought to arm himself with deadly weapons, America led a mission to make the world safer and liberate the Iraqi people.

"At the start of 2003, just a year ago, he controlled the lives and the future of 25-million people. Now at the beginning of 2004, he's in jail. He will never again brutalize his people, never again threaten the United States of America."

He spoke of duty and sacrifice – the sacrifices of those in uniform, and the people who support them.

"Members of our military depend, above all else, on the support of their families — and I want to thank them, the family members who are with us today. You're a close-knit community; you look out for each other. The spirit of

See Cheney, page 3

Good to know

Surety Tidbits - 2 days to U.S. Air Forces in Europe Inspector General Surety Inspections

Don't give up. If the IG finds a problem, and they will, don't give up. Can it be fixed on the spot? If yes, fix it. If no, initiate corrective action.

The IG surety inspection team will arrive at Aviano in two days. Remember that a positive attitude can be the key to success. Pride, professionalism, and outstanding performance are desirable for most, but are considered standards for Aviano warriors.

12 Days until the Installation Excellence Award visit

Aviano is one of three Air Force finalists for the Commander-in-Chief's Installation Excellence Award. The award recognizes the efforts of the people who operate and maintain DOD installations who have done the best with their resources to support the mission.

The award encourages commanders to create an environment that promotes innovative and creative ways of enhancing base-level services, facilities and quality of life.

IESB members will evaluate how Aviano programs improved customer satisfaction, improved quality of life, enhanced productivity, promoted unit cohesiveness, enhanced recognition of outstanding individual achievement, promoted environmental safety, and encouraged bottom-to-top communications and team problem solving.

IESB tip: Don't spend ten minutes telling board members your mission, because the team is comprised of wing commanders who understand Air Force missions well. Instead, show how the base has been innovative and creative in accomplishing the mission.

RESCON Info

Aviano will remain in RESCON Alpha this weekend. The last DUI occurred on Jan. 3. The wing will reach the 31 days without a DUI goal on Tuesday Feb. 3.

Cheney, from page 1

volunteerism at the base is strong. America is proud of each and every one of our military families."

In a speech that lasted only eight minutes, Cheney stressed the importance of the role of the U.S. military and the mission they perform. He also remarked on the gratitude of the American people and President Bush for the freedoms service members secure.

"In the face of this danger, we have only one option, and that's to take the fight to the enemy. The mission going forward is still difficult, and the enemy is still dangerous. We have lost some brave Americans - and our Italian allies have also sacrificed in this cause.

"America does not take for granted our freedom, or those who put their lives on the line for the security of us all. We remember every life lost, and we honor every name."

Cheney also covered topics such as the continuing war on terrorism, the changes happening in Iraq and the teamwork between Italian and American forces here at Aviano and all over the world. He thanked Italian leadership here at Aviano for their professionalism.

"All the members of our military are engaged in a great and honorable cause. You are protecting innocent life, and defending human freedom against determined enemies. In this time of testing for our country, much has been asked of you.

"And I can assure you, on behalf of the President and all Americans: This



Airman Desiree Hayden

Lt. Gen. Wally Moorhead, 16th Air Force commander, and Brig. Gen. Mike Worden, 31st Fighter Wing commander, introduce Vice President Dick Cheney during a rally here Tuesday. The vice president visited Aviano during a trip to Europe that included visits with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Italian President Carlo Ciampi and Pope John Paul II.

nation has confidence in your abilities, we are certain of your success, and we are grateful for your brave service to the United States of America. Thank you very much."

Following the speech, Cheney awarded Master Sgt. Russell Beasley the Bronze Star and reenlisted a handful of Aviano airmen.

Cheney then descended the stage to shake hands with servicemembers before boarding a helicopter headed for Vicenza, Italy, home of the U. S. Army's 173rd

Airborne Brigade.

The Vice President's visit and comments seemed to impress the crowd who responded with cheers, hoots and applause.

"I thought his speech was very inspirational. It was motivating," said Airman Desiree Hayden, 31st Communications Squadron. "Even after the speech was over, when he went down and started shaking people's hands - it just showed that he cared."



Senior Airman Priscilla Robinson

Vice President Dick Cheney talks with airmen after his speech. The vice president spent several minutes shaking hands with Aviano members.



Airman Desiree Hayden

Vice President Dick Cheney presents the Bronze Star Medal to Master Sgt. Russell Beasley, 31st Contracting Squadron. Vice President Cheney also re-enlisted several Aviano members during a Tuesday rally here in Hangar One.



Aviano Air Base Editorial Staff

Commander.....Brig. Gen. Mike Worden
Chief, Public Affairs.....Capt. Eric Elliott
Chief, Internal.....Staff Sgt. Jerome Baysmore
Editor.....Senior Airman Julie Weckerlein
Co-editor.....2nd Lt. Lea Ann Chambers
Staffwriter.....Airman 1st Class Jessica Switzer
Public Affairs volunteer.....Martin Weckerlein
Photo support.....Visual Information Center

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The public affairs staff reserves the right to edit all material in accordance with the Associated Press Stylebook.

Austere Challenge tests USAFE planning, warfighting

By 1st Lt. Elizabeth Aptekar

USAFE Public Affairs

U.S. Air Forces in Europe's planning and warfighting skills were put to the test at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, Jan. 9 to 16 during Austere Challenge 2004.

Approximately 500 16th Air Force, USAFE command and stateside augmentee members comprised a joint air operations staff during the first of a three-phase training exercise testing the warfighting headquarters concept, said Col. Steven J. DePalmer, 32nd Air Operations Group commander.

"COMUSAFE [U.S. Air Forces in Europe commander] directed that USAFE be the first Air Force major command to migrate to the new 'warfighting headquarters' concept," said Colonel DePalmer. "This means that we should be able to fight a war at the flip of a switch, rather than waiting for stateside augmentation."

The first phase of the exercise involved Crisis Action Planning and writing a Joint Air Operations Plan. The 32nd Air Operations Group, with both rated and non-rated specialties from communicators to planners and operators, combined with the 152nd AOG from New York to form USAFE's Air Operations Center.

"This week we are training with 16th Air Force, and applying the strengths and restraints that are a part of real day-to-day operations," the colonel continued. "Working with Air Forces Europe [formerly known as USAFE Theater Air and Space Operations Center] and the Air Force Forces staff, we're developing a solid plan, so that whatever we come up with operationally can be supported with basing, beds, beans and bullets."

As the command's only AOC, its personnel support both the 3rd and 16th Air Force; developing the strategy and plans to support theater operations, said Colonel DePalmer.

"(We're) applying air, space and information power to achieve the effects the Joint Force Commander wants," he said. "The AOC monitors all this in real time to assess if our strategy is working."

Lt. Gen. Glen W. "Wally" Moorhead III, 16th Air Force commander, was dual hatted as the Joint Forces Air Component Commander and the Commander of Air Force Forces for the exercise.

The JFACC's role is to conduct the combat operations through the AOC, whereas the AFFOR's role is to support and sustain the fight.

"We are at the stage where we get familiar with the scenario and find out what the joint forces commander is going to ask us to do," the general said. "We work through processes, we figure out the intent and how we are going to set up for this."

"This week is an academic training session to learn the basic foundation and doctrine of why we are doing this — it sets the stage and the foundational piece in how we develop our strategy with a whole new generation of warfighters," he said. "The training helps warplanners make the important connection between unit-level tasks and their overall strategy so that airmen on the flightline know and understand why they are doing what they are doing."

Overseeing this first-ever warfighting headquarters concept was the USAFE Inspector General, who evaluated Phase I of the AFEUR Certification process.

"Working with Air Forces Europe [formerly known as USAFE Theater Air and Space Operations Center] and the Air Force Forces staff, we're developing a solid plan, so that whatever we come up with operationally can be supported with basing, beds, beans and bullets."

-Col. Steven J. DePalmer,
32nd Air Operations Group commander

"Traditionally, the evaluation teams focus on inspections at the tactical level of warfare such as flight, squadron and wing level," said Col. John A. Snider, USAFE Inspector General. "This is the first time for us on the operational level or higher — it's a certification rather than inspection."

During the certification, IG personnel looked at key processes, organizational structures and products of the scenario, said Colonel Snider. The scenario products, such as the development of strategy and planning, deployment or movement of forces and employment to accomplish the mission, are designed to replicate what happens in real world.

"We are helping develop an organization with emerging concepts when nothing is written," he said. "... It's a tribute to the professionalism of these airmen."

Since there is no basis for a rating system, a mission-ready or not mission-ready recommendation will be provided to the USAFE commander. The recommendation will include strengths and areas of improvement, and will also identify teams and individuals.

Although this concept may be new, the command isn't 'winging it'. General Moorhead is getting help from some experienced joint warfighters throughout the exercise, and said he appreciates getting mentored by people who've "been there, done that, got the T-shirt."

Retired Lt. Gen. Michael C. Short, Operation Allied Force Combined Forces Air Component Command and former 16th Air Force commander; as well as retired Lt. Gen. Joseph E. Hurd, former Air Component Command commander U.S. Combined Forces Command and 7th Air Force commander, are the senior leaders providing expertise. They're ensuring scenarios provide a realistic depiction of the uses and impacts of aerospace power, in this exercise of a joint campaign model.

"It's important to understand that while our focus tends to be on flying airplanes ... of equal importance is the support structure behind it," said General Short. "In this case it's what we call the Air Force Forces. You can't fly airplanes if you haven't got fuel, you haven't got a place for all the people to sleep or eat, if you haven't got force protection, most importantly if you haven't got communications. There is an enormous effort and it's a very difficult task."

The second phase of Austere Challenge 2004, is scheduled in February. It will consist of a deployment exercise, including planning for a flow of forces to support an operation. The final phase to test and certify the concept will be the actual execution of a combat operation. This phase is scheduled for March. (USAFENS)

Personnel Reliability Program tips; Did you know?

Tip One:

Individuals involved in an alcohol-related incident are, at a minimum, suspended from PRP duties.

The Certifying Official shall conduct an investigation of the circumstances and request a medical evaluation.

An alcohol related incident is any incident where alcohol is determined to be a contributing factor.

Tip Two:

Medical appointments are mandatory appointments. Do not miss mandatory medical appointments as this may delay the certification process and puts undo strain on the mission.

Tip Three:

Know what over-the-counter substances you can take without reporting. Ensure you

obtain an Approved OTC Card from your unit PRP monitor if you are unsure which medications are approved while on PRP.

Tip Four:

Ensure that you have your current PRP code on your orders each time you go TDY. Your unit PRP monitor validates the code. And, you receive a TDY briefing prior to departure.

Aviano's FOD program keeps flyers safe

By Airman 1st Class Jessica Switzer
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

"Most people don't realize how strong the intake of an aircraft engine can be," said Master Sgt. Jeffery Spivey, 31st Fighter Wing FOD manager. "Anything can be sucked in."

The last FOD related incident at Aviano was last October when a 'small object' was ingested by an aircraft engine and caused \$30,000 in damage.

Foreign object damage is caused to aircraft and people by a wide range of material including loose hardware, pavement fragments, building materials, rocks, sand and even wildlife.

"The main thing is keeping the aircrews safe," said Sergeant Spivey. "I help keep the flightline safe so the pilot doesn't have to worry what his engine might suck up, and how much damage it will cause."

FOD usually refers to the damage caused to an aircraft engine, but it can cover damage to any number of other things too, including aircraft tires.

In an effort to control FOD, maintenance crews clean up the area

around the aircraft when they are finished working on it, and airfield management performs regular FOD walks, to inspect the flightline for rocks, paper and anything else that doesn't belong, the sergeant added.

"Sometimes when there is a buildup of debris, airfield management will call out the sweepers to pick it up," Sergeant Spivey said.

These large trucks drive slowly around the area, brushes underneath sweep the rocks, dust and other materials up and off the flightline.

Regular inspections, such as examining the condition of the runway, bird activity around the airfield and anything else that can affect the operation of aircraft and vehicles, can guarantee safety.

The airfield maintenance flight has the important role of ensuring these inspections and FOD walks get done.

"This is our job, it's what we do," said Master Sgt. Warren Harper, deputy chief of airfield management.

While the flightline itself is a big part of what they do, airfield management also takes care of the grass around it. Animals and birds often nest beside an airfield and can be hazards, Sergeant Harper said.

"Even small things can cause massive amounts of damage to an aircraft engine," he said. "We inspect the flightlines and keep them clean."



General-ly fit

Brig. Gen. Michael Worden rides a stationary bike during his annual fitness test Monday. The test is designed to determine the overall fitness of military members. The Aviano Health and Wellness Center is spreading the tests over the space of a year. Most units are expected to designate the members birth month as the month of their test.

Airman Desiree Hayden

RESCON CORNER

	<u>DUIs</u>	<u>Major Vehicle Accidents</u>
Week	0	1
28 days	4	3
Year	5	4

0 : Injuries from accidents this week

**Have you saved anyone this week?
Your story could be in this space.**

Aviano members who have kept someone from drinking and driving can send their stories to vigileer@aviano.af.mil.

The stories will be run in the RESCON corner every week they are received.

Stories must be 200 words or less and tell a true story. It can be about the writer or someone they know. Submissions may remain anonymous if desired, but must be received by Thursday each week to run in the next week's paper.

For more information call the Vigileer staff at Ext. 7555.

Sortie Board

	31st FW		510th FS		555th FS	
	Hours	Sorties	Hours	Sorties	Hours	Sorties
Goal	776.6	507	395.3	191	381.3	248
Ahead/						
Behind	+1034.5	+136	+809.3	-8	+225.2	+144

W-2 on MyPay

Active-duty military W-2's are now available on my pay. See <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>. For more information, call finance customer Service at Ext. 7409.

AAFES' temporary location

Army and Air Force Exchange Service members will set-up a temporary Robin Hood and Anthony's Pizza in Sabre Hall Area One until the completion of the new mini-mall in July.

Burger King investigation

The safety investigation board is seeking people with information surrounding the Burger King fire Jan. 12 in Area One. Contact the special investigation board at Ext. 8968.

Gate 10 open

Gate 10, the flightline contractor/BX gate, is open to base members on weekends until Feb. 22. Gate 10 opens from 7 a.m. Saturday through 10 p.m. Sunday. Gate 7, the main flightline gate, is closed on weekends while Gate 10 is open. The new operating hours are necessary to facilitate BX and Commissary access to the flightline during the North-East road closure in Zappala.

Combat Care volunteers

Aviano members interested in beginning a parent co-op — to watch children for a few hours on occasion and in exchange earn child-free time to run errands or work out — are invited to attend the kick off meeting at 11 a.m. Feb. 6 in the 31st Mission Support

Group conference room.

OPSEC Information

The local Operations Security Newsletter may be found at: <https://avo-intranet/WingPlans/OPSEC/pubs/OPSECnewsletter.PDF>. The Information prepares personnel on upcoming inspections as well as protect Aviano's information. More information may be found on the OPSEC webpage on the Aviano Intranet.

Commissary scholarship

Aviano seniors may stop by the commissary and pick up a scholarship application for a chance at \$1,500 towards a college degree. Application deadline is Feb. 18. For more information, call Mr. Ronald Foster at Exts. 7647 or 7648

Patriot Express change

The Patriot Express missions scheduled to depart Atlanta, Baltimore and Frankfurt Feb. 12 and 19 and arrive/depart Aviano Feb. 13 and 20 are cancelled. Contact the TMO passenger movement section at Ext. 5646 for more information.

UMUC graduate programs

University of Maryland University College offers three graduate programs at Aviano, M.S. in Management Information Systems, M.A. in Counseling Psychology, and M.Ed. in Guidance and Counseling. Graduate classes for term III start Saturday. For more information, call Ext. 5365.

Childhood Immunization Fair

The no appointment necessary base

Childhood Immunization Fair is 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. today in the base immunization clinic lobby in Area One.

Voting assistance

The Aviano 24-hour Voting Assistance Hotline is Ext. 5357.

Split disbursements for civilians

Civilians are required by public law to use split disbursement on all government travel card charges made during temporary duty. Split disbursement is not available for permanent change of station payments at this time. For more information, call Ext. 7319.

New pharmacy hours

The base pharmacy is open 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. Aviano members may also call in refills after hours at Ext. 5214 for pick up the following duty day.

Loan center

The Aviano Family Support Center loan center has items for people to use while awaiting their household goods shipment such as: toasters, fans, irons, ironing boards, pots, pans, cutlery, dish packs and much more. For more information or to sign up, call Ext. 5663.

Family readiness initiative

The Aviano Family Support Center has the capability for parents to record themselves reading children's books on video, CD and DVD. For more information call Ext. 5663.

Transportation association

The National Defense Transportation Association Mediterranean Chapter's first quarterly meeting is 5:30 p.m. Feb. 19 at Alpe Adria. For more information, call Capt. Sia Shinas at Ext. 7470, Joyce Storm at Ext. 7583 or Janette Ketchum at Ext. 8242.

Coupon collection

Aviano members can bring their unwanted coupons to the Aviano Family Support Center from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and exchange them for needed ones. For more information, call Ext. 5407.

Spouse's Benvenuti

Spouse's Benvenuti is 8:30 a.m. to noon Monday through Wednesday at the Aviano Family Support Center. The class is geared toward family members, who wish to learn about Italy in a relaxed setting. For more information, call Ext. 5407.

Sponsor training

Sponsor training class is 1 to 2 p.m. Wednesday in the Aviano Family Support Center. The class assists sponsors to help newcomers start their new assignment at Aviano off right. For more information, call Ext. 5407.

Reel Times

Today – 5 p.m. "Looney Tunes: Back in Action" Rated PG

The crew searches for the mythical blue diamond. Starring: Brendan Fraser and Jenna Elfman

Today – 8 p.m. "Stuck on You" Rated PG

Conjoined twins help revive a television show that becomes a hit. Starring: Matt Damon and Greg Kinnear

Saturday - 2 p.m. "Radio" Rated PG

A football coach befriends a mentally challenged man. Starring: Cuba Gooding Jr. and Ed Harris

Saturday - 7 p.m. "Love Actually" Rated R

Love causes chaos — especially on Christmas Eve. Starring: Hugh Grant and Martine McCutcheon

Sunday – 2 p.m. "Looney Tunes: Back in Action" Rated PG

Sunday – 7 p.m. "Stuck on You" Rated PG

Monday and Tuesday – Closed

Wednesday – 7 p.m. "Love Actually" Rated R

Thursday – 7 p.m. "Radio" Rated PG

Feb. 6 – 5 p.m. "The Cat in the Hat" Rated PG

Sally and Conrad are left home on a rainy day and entertained by a mysterious man-size cat. Starring: Mike Myers, Kelly Preston

Feb. 6 – 8 p.m. "Lord of the Rings: Return of the King" Rated PG-13

Hobbits Frodo and Sam push farther into the land of Mordor. Starring: Elijah Wood and Ian McKellen

Kudos from Vice President Cheney help airmen remember they are important

By Senior Master Sgt.
Thomas Saunders

Det. 8 American Forces Network

Vice President Dick Cheney's address during his visit to Aviano Tuesday and his message of thanks hit home with members of Aviano who jammed into Hangar One.

During his address, the vice president told the audience that millions of Americans think about them every day.

For Airman 1st Class Leticia Brown-Secci of the 31st Communications Squadron's configuration management shop, the visit fulfilled a sense of purpose for what airmen do.

"The visit is important because it makes what we do seem important," said Airman Brown-Secci. "It shows us that on a day-to-day basis what we do is important, that what we do is making a difference."

It's a feeling that Chief Master Sgt. Daniel Gill, 31st Fighter Wing command chief, said the airmen of the wing need to feel.

"He made a conscious effort to come here because our role is so critical and important and because we have so many people down range," said Chief Gill. "For the vice president to take time out to visit us says that we all – from four-star general to our family members – are

important.

"He really cares about us, and this demonstrates his great compassion for what we do."

Other airmen also gave the vice president high marks for the visit.

Airman 1st Class Jeann Hiatt of the 31st Civil Engineer Squadron's readiness shop felt pleased that Vice President Cheney visited to show his support.

"It's nice to show that they care and what we do is important. We put a lot of time and effort into what we do. It's nice to be recognized."

Other 31st CES members Airman 1st Class Douglas Nichols and Tanner Toby of the structures shop, agreed that the vice president's visit would leave people more pumped up.

"It's nice to see he cares enough to come here and see what we do. It'll give everyone a boost," said Airman Nichols.

Airman Toby noted, "He's here for us and that makes us proud of what we do. He makes us proud."

It was the message that millions of Americans think about us every day that reached Airman 1st Class Jessenia Reyes and Nick Amoroso of the 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron material readiness shop.

"The visit makes us think we are being thought of. Sometimes we don't think people think of us," said Airman

"The visit is important because it makes what we do seem important ... It shows us that on a day-to-day basis what we do is important."

-Airman 1st Class

Leticia Brown-Secci, 31st Communications Squadron

Reyes. "He proved me wrong."

Airman Amoroso said the message also showed him that no matter how small a role someone thinks they play, it's still important.

"Even if we think we have a small job, someone way up shows he appreciates us no matter what we do," said Amoroso. "It shows that they do care."

Chief Gill said that Vice President Cheney's words of thanks also targeted a very strategic part of our Aviano family – the families.

"It was very important for the families to hear the vice president to show he cares about the families," said Chief Gill. "The military isn't just about the military, it's also about our families."

"Many of our military members are downrange and they'll feel better knowing that the vice president thanked their spouses and families here for all they do while their loved ones are deployed," said Chief Gill.

Tell 'em you love 'em

Vigileer offers space for Valentine greetings



Valentine's Day is quickly approaching, and it is the day dedicated to telling your loved ones you love them.

Aviano members can submit their Valentine greetings to vigileer@aviano.af.mil to be published in the Valentine's edition. Greetings can be for family and loved ones here at Aviano, or for those deployed.

Greetings should not exceed more than three lines. Aviano members can submit more than one greeting, but space will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

Submissions must be received by noon on Monday, Feb. 9 to be included in the edition.

For more information, call Ext. 7344. (31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs)

Medical, dental announces promotion board results

Thursday the medical and dental corps announced the results of their promotion board.

One major was selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel, and five captains were selected for promotion to major.

To lieutenant colonel:

Maj. Devin Donnelly, 31st Medical Operations Squadron

To major:

Capt. Donald Bernardini, 555th Fighter Squadron

Capt. Michelle Dullanty, 31st Dental Squadron

Capt. William Tucker, 31st DS

Capt. Michael Hafran, 31st MDOS

Capt. Tracee Ray, 31st MDOS

Council lets airmen speak their piece

Aviano airmen pull together to create medium, discuss issues in group forum

By Airman 1st Class Jessica Switzer
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

A group meets to give Aviano's junior enlisted a way to voice their grievances or opinions the fourth Thursday of every month. The Aviano Airman's Council was organized last October to help wing airmen share ideas in an open forum.

"I have been a member of the Airman's Council or something similar at every other base I have been at," said Senior Airman Lacy Johnson, Airman's Council president. "When I got here and realized [Aviano] didn't have one, I felt it was important that there should be."

Airman Johnson got together with Senior Airman Joel Benavidez, 603rd Air Control Squadron, and pitched their idea to the president of Aviano's Top Three, Senior Master Sgt. David Terrini, 31st Medical Support Squadron.

"[Sergeant Terrini] brought up the idea to [Chief Master Sgt.

Daniel Gill] and two days or so later we all had a meeting with Chief Gill, and it just started from there," Airman Johnson said.

They enlisted the help of one of the members of Aviano's Top Three Organization, Senior Master Sgt. John Wood, 31st Maintenance Squadron, to help the council get off its feet. He gave the council a few ideas and from there the council grew into a self supporting entity.

"They are energizing and bringing new people into it," Sergeant Wood said. "They started from scratch, and it's just gaining momentum. They are on AFN telling others to get to know their representative."

There are one or two representatives from each squadron. Enlisted members from airman basic to senior airman are welcome at the council's meetings. They can voice their concerns and the council addresses them.

The council covers all kinds of things that airmen bring up.

"It's for everyone to have a say so about their living situation and what's going on around base," said Airman Johnson.

"Without this type of organization made up of young airmen, they wouldn't have the opportunity to speak as a group to wing leadership," Sergeant Wood concluded.

Aviano couple rethinks career path, re-enlistment options

By Staff Sgt. Jerome Baysmore
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Many airmen face the choice of re-enlisting or getting out. Senior Airmen Greg and Ruth Cooley turned that decision into a joint one.

The couple said they turned to Master Sgt. David Poulin, Aviano's career assistance advisor, because they were frustrated and needed more guidance in Airman Greg Cooley's choice.

"My intentions were to get out after my cross-train [package] was denied," Airman Greg Cooley, 555th Aircraft Maintenance Unit electro-environmentalist said.

"I talked to Sgt. Poulin, and he reminded me of all the benefits the Air Force has over civilian life."

Airmen Ruth Cooley said things weren't going very well before they talked to Sgt. Poulin.

"It was so stressful, I was like, 'Why don't you just get out?'" Airman Ruth Cooley, 31st Maintenance Squadron Munitions Flight Administrator, said.

"We knew he wouldn't get a job right away, and we decided [re-enlisting] was the best for both of us."

Sgt. Poulin said he uses his experience, which includes seven assignments and four career fields, to show others that leaving the Air Force isn't always the best option.

"The career decisions you make today will affect your future," Sgt. Poulin said. "I am a firm believer that you are in control of your career path."

"Many times during our careers we allow others to push us into poor career decisions by accepting the, 'No, you can't do that!' And sometimes by not doing a little needed research about all the available options."

"In any case, your supervisor or I may be able to suggest a couple alternative paths to your career destination," he said.

Airman Greg Cooley added after listening to Sgt. Poulin's career-counseling advice, he's applied for a special-duty assignment in the Military Postal Service.

He's also learned enough from Sgt. Poulin and doing research on his own to give some of his own advice.

"Don't wait until you get your [Date Eligible for Return From Overseas] rip," Airman Greg Cooley said. "Look into it as soon as possible, get several opinions and then find out which one is correct."

Hidden Heroes



Name: **Staff Sgt. Robert McCord**
Position: **Vehicle Maintenance**
Organization: **31st Logistics Readiness Squadron**

Sergeant McCord was the first Aviano recipient of the Hidden Heroes coin. He was recognized for his assistance and dedication in a project converting an underground parking garage in Area Two into a playground. Despite cold, damp conditions, he devoted three days of his leave to work on the project.

Have extra time?

We have a volunteer opportunity for you!

Contact Hidden Heroes at Ext. 5663.

Aviano welcomes new chef to La Bella Vista

By 2nd Lt. Lea Ann Chambers
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

When La Bella Vista Club opened last November, the building wasn't the only thing that was new – the club also hired a new chef.

Paul Currier began cooking for his family at age 10 after the death of his mother. He began to enjoy preparing food for others.

"I like to eat and try different things," said the Boston, Mass. native. "I love the simplicity of Italian cuisine – fresh vegetables and fresh ingredients together."

At 13, he worked as a dishwasher in a restaurant near Boston finally moving to an apprenticeship in a fine-dining restaurant under Italian chef, Joseph Pignato, at Joseph's Winterstreet Café. Here, Chef Currier was able to refine his culinary technique. By age 20 he was head chef at the restaurant where he once washed dishes.

Chef Currier traveled to Europe to experience dining in the highest rated French restaurants. While abroad he was hired by Ramstein's officers' club. He worked in Ramstein for two

years before accepting the head chef position here at Aviano.

"A chef's position is something we have been contemplating for the collocated club for sometime. When we heard that Mr. Currier was interested, it worked perfectly with our plans to move into the new club," said Jim Wolfe, La Bella Vista Club manager. "Now with Chef Currier on board, we are well on our way to providing that first class service that our members deserve."

Chef Currier plans on introducing a new dinner menu that features fresh fish as well as steak. He wants to ensure that the club's food program is customer driven.

"It's a great experience to be in Italy. My cooking background includes mostly French and Italian," said Chef Currier. "I love the view and the weather here. Being landlocked in Germany, I really missed the ocean."

La Bella Vista Club is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner Monday through Friday with Champagne Brunch every Sunday and night life entertainment Wednesdays through Saturday. For more information call Ext. 4303 or check the 31st Services Squadron Website for the club calendar.

Country band brings 'southern comfort' to troops

By Airman 1st Class
Jessica Switzer

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Three-months ago the call went out for a country band. Three guys from Detachment 3, 721st Air Mobility Operations Group, and one civilian from the 31st Services Squadron answered. Within a month the four had begun to form the group now known as Whiskey River.

Saturday the ball room at the La Bella Vista club was filled with cowboy hats and boots as the self-styled 'southern rock' band played a number of country hits.

"We really just want to bring some of

the states here," said drummer and backup vocalist Lanny Meekins, 31st Services Squadron.

The band performed a number of covers of country songs as well as two original compositions by lead singer and rhythm guitarist Chris Medley, a staff sergeant from the 721st AMOG.

Sergeant Medley said that the best part of performing is the crowd response.

"The more they get into it, the better things are," he said.

For others in the band it's more about the music.

"I just like to play music," said bassist Marty Dean, a technical sergeant from the

721st AMOG.

Lead guitarist Adam Ragland, an airman 1st class from the 721st AMOG, has been playing guitar for two years.

"I started messing around with it at a friend's house and just fell in love with it," he said.

Regardless of their reasons for joining, the band has worked hard.

"Every person in the band has total drive to play," said Mr. Meekins. "They all have a real strong passion for music."

Whiskey River hopes to make performances at the club a regular occurrence, as well as trying to get into local Italian clubs.



Chief's Choice

Staff Sgt.
Lauren Hill



Unit: 31st Maintenance Squadron

Job title: Assistant Production Control Section chief

Hometown: Idaho Falls, Idaho

"I selected Sergeant Hill as my Chief's Choice winner because she has amassed more than 135 credits towards a degree in Engineering; making two dean's lists. She participated in two Toys for Tots fund raisers and raised over \$2,000 for Humanitarian Essential Aid Relief Team (HEART.) Without question, Sergeant Hill is a leader among leaders in and out of the workplace."

–Chief Master Sgt. Reggie Williams
31st Medical Group

New vehicle system heightens safety at Aviano

By 2nd Lt. Lea Ann Chambers
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Aviano will soon have an extra hand in detecting explosives at the gates.

The new Vehicle Explosive Detection System is scheduled to arrive this summer.

The system represents the newest technology to detect explosives at the greatest distance possible. In April 2001, then U.S. Air Forces in Europe commander, Gen. Gregory Martin released a Combat Needs Statement detailing the needs for a detection system at vehicle entry points on U.S. installations in Europe - VEDS is the answer to his request.

"The mobile VEDS can be deployed anywhere at anytime," said Tech. Sgt. Steven Doll, 31st Security Forces Squadron NCO in charge of plans and programs. "It offers security forces the ability to rapidly and reliably scan cars and trucks for explosives."

When Aviano received money for an x-ray machine, base leadership wanted the next step.

The shortcomings of traditional search methods were great enough for an inspection technology corporation, Ancore, to create VEDS.

"Our goal is to deter and detect potentially harmful illegal substances from entering the installation," said Sergeant Doll.

Previous searches were limited to manual searches by security forces and canine units. This system was labor intensive and unreliable. Because of

manpower issues it was impossible for security forces to check every vehicle that came through the gates.

"There are a lot of firsts associated with this system," said Master Sgt. Edward Coufal, 31st SFS NCOIC of training. "This is the first system of its kind in the Air Force, marrying two technologies to create an entirely new system."

Aviano's mobile VEDS will not have these limitations. The system was developed in response to the Oklahoma City bombing and detects all types of known explosives; military, commercial and home made.

Although Aviano will receive the mobile system, a track-mounted system is also available.

"VEDS will be part of an overall integrated base-defense security system. The idea for IBDSS came from a need identified by Brig. Gen. James Shamess, director of Security Forces for the Air Force," said Sergeant Coufal.

"The goal of IBDSS is to tie together inputs from multiple sensors, present a common operating picture, and allow the user to employ tactics, techniques and procedures to counter any adversary."

The unmarked mobile VEDS looks like a common truck from the outside. A state-of-the-art device is mounted inside the truck.

Mobile VEDS allows police to non-intrusively check potential hot spots to rapidly secure any area.

The Mobile VEDS uses Thermal-Neutron Analysis technology, to detect specific material signatures identifying

whether the chemical composition of any part of the cargo matches a known explosive.

In contrast to conventional x-ray inspection methods which require an operator to find explosives by identifying fleeting shape or density anomalies, Mobile VEDS uses TNA to analyze the key elemental composition of materials hidden inside cars, vans, cargo pallets or semi-trailers.

"If it works here, this might be an option for other commanders throughout the Air Force," said Sergeant Doll.



Courtesy photo

Mobile VEDS checks the cargo of a semi trailer at a vehicle entry point. Mobile VEDS can be deployed anytime, to anywhere on base where officials suspect a threat. A mobile VEDS arrives at Aviano this summer.

Aviano members merit Bronze Stars

Master Sgt. Mary De Coste, 31st CONS

Sergeant De Coste contributed to the effectiveness of Operation Enduring Freedom, ensuring the success of combat operations against Al Qaeda terrorist networks in Afghanistan from Nov. 18, 2002 to May 23, 2003. She managed projects that enabled the timely bed down of American C-130s and KC-135s, Italian and New Zealander C-130s and the continued support of European participating Air Forces F-16s. She averted mission shut down through the expedient purchase of arctic grade diesel, preventing gelling of fuel during minus 14 degree Fahrenheit temperatures. She spearheaded power production operations at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan and runway rubber removal for special operations missions at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan. She also oversaw the renovation of a local school, the first ever humanitarian assistance construction project in Central Asia, and the largest of its kind in the Kyrgyz Republic.



Senior Master Sgt. Lisa Minkos, 31st LRS

Sergeant Minkos managed the largest Air Force supply operation in the Kuwait Theater of Operations to provide support to 191 deployed aircraft flying 6,300 combat missions in support of Operations Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom from Dec. 13, 2002 to June 8, 2003. Sergeant Minkos directed the ex-

change of 3,598 battledress over garments for new Joint Service Lightweight Suit Technology chemical protective ensembles for Air Force personnel at Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base, Camp Doha and Al Mubarek Air Base in only eight days. She ensured the delivery of over \$1.2 million worth of critical assets to sustain A-10 close air support operations at Tallil Air Base, Iraq.

Capt. Rod Cameron, 31st CONS

Captain Cameron contributed to the effectiveness of Operation Enduring Freedom, ensuring the success of combat operations against Al Qaeda terrorist networks in Afghanistan from Nov. 19, 2002 to May 23, 2003. He managed projects that enabled the bed down of American C-130s and KC-135s, Italian and New Zealander C-130s and the continued support of European participating Air Forces F-16s. He averted mission shut down through the expedient purchase of arctic grade diesel, preventing disastrous gelling of fuel during minus 14 degree Fahrenheit temperatures. He spearheaded power production operations at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan and runway rubber removal for special operations missions at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan. He also oversaw the first ever humanitarian assistance construction project in Central Asia, and the largest of its kind in the Kyrgyz Republic. (From Citations)



Senior Airman Priscilla Robinson

A very special re-enlistment

After his speech Tuesday Vice President of the United States, Dick Cheney, re-enlists several Aviano airmen during his visit. Staff Sgt. Maurice Toole, 31st Maintenance Operations Squadron, his wife Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Toole, 31st Operation Support Squadron, Tech. Sgt. Vincent CastroGiovanni, 16th Air Force, Tech. Sgt. Raymond Sharp, 31st Maintenance Squadron and Tech. Sgt. Enrique Flores, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron, were re-enlisted by the vice president.



Airman Desiree Hayden

With the band

Airman 1st Class Adam Ragland plays lead guitar for the Aviano band, Whiskey River, at a concert Saturday at the La Bella Vista Club. The country band played covers of country hits as well as two original pieces. Story on page 13.

WEEK in PHOTOS

A brief look at Aviano Air Base



Staff Sgt. Suzanne Jenkins

Keeping people safe

Airman 1st Class Jason Bowers, 510th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron Advanced Concept Ejection System shop, performs a seat inspection Friday.

Aviano elementary spellers grade 'A' at bee

By 2nd Lt. Lea Ann Chambers

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Thirty Aviano Elementary School students from grades three to five participated in the school's inaugural spelling bee to find who would gain the title as Aviano's top speller.

Two students from each third, fourth and fifth grade classroom won individual class competitions to qualify for the school-wide bee.

"The Elementary Parent Teacher Student Association presented it to the principal and we all thought it was a good educational opportunity," said Valerie Flores, Aviano PTSA treasurer.

Spellers were given their word from caller, Myrna Moore, Aviano Elementary School teacher, and then were required to repeat the word before spelling it. They were also provided note-pads and pencils so they could write out the word and visualize it before spelling it.

"I liked being in front of all the people," said speller Autumn Rodriguez, Aviano Elementary third grader. "I want to be in the spelling bee next year too."



2nd Lt. Lea Ann Chambers

Spelling bee caller Myrna Moore gives a speller his word. Spellers were required to repeat the word before spelling.

Autumn will get that chance. The PTSA expects to hold another spelling bee next year.

"We're hoping the next PTSA board will carry it on," said Mrs. Flores.

Spellers were allowed to stop at any time and start their word over, but they were not permitted to change any of the letters they had already said. If a student spelled the word incorrectly they took a seat at the back of the stage.

Once all spellers had a chance at a word and the round was over, those students who misspelled a word during the round were dismissed.

Spellers faced a panel of judges from the Aviano community including Col. Edward Ryder, 31st Fighter Wing vice commander, Sheri Marler, Aviano Middle School Parent Teacher Organization, Lisa Eckhoff, Aviano teacher of the year, and Paul Moore, School Liaison Office. The judges were responsible for determining if the student repeated and spelled the word correctly.

All participants were considered winners; prizes were awarded to all the spellers.

"Every person who showed up was awarded a certificate and a dictionary," said Mrs. Flores. "They were also given movie passes, bowling passes and a gift certificate to the book fair."

Olivia Welker, Aviano Elementary fifth grader, was the grand prize winner after going eight rounds, beating out runner up Taelor Wine and correctly spelling "phobic".

Among her prizes were a 40 Euro gift certificate to Casa Bianca, a \$50 gift certificate to the base exchange and a dictionary valued at \$90.

She will go on to compete in Germany against other Department of Defense schools in Europe.



Speller number 7 is given his word from the caller. Spellers were known to the judges only by the numbers they wore in order to prevent any bias.

Sports Briefs

Starlight sled

Sledding under the stars at the top of a Cortina mountain to Cortina's astronomical observatory. Call Outdoor Rec for more information at Ext. 8623.

Winter equipment rental

Carving skis, snowboards, boots and poles, roof racks for all cars are also available. For a complete listing stop by Outdoor Rec in the flightline area or call Ext. 8623.

Ski and snowboard lesson

Children and adult lessons are available at Piancavallo. Lesson dates are Feb. 14 to March 13. The deadline to sign up is today, or until the class is full. Call Outdoor Rec at Ext. 8623 to sign up or for more information.

Four person scramble

The Alpine Golf Course hosts a four person scramble tournament Feb. 21. A shotgun start is 9 a.m. There is a \$10 entry fee. Sign up in advance at the golf course by stopping by the club house or calling Ext. 7386.

Retiree special

Military retirees receive a discount every Monday at the golf course, which includes a \$2 breakfast plate and a free riding cart for 9 holes. Show ID before ordering or signing for a cart. Call Ext. 7386 for more information.

Mulligan's monthly special

One day per week during February Mulligan's Grill offers Italian food specials. Call Ext. 7386 for more information or a schedule of the specials.

Mulligan's Grill drawing

Register to win a \$25 coupon for Mulligan's Grill. Patrons must purchase \$3 worth of food to be eligible. Receipts must be filled out on the back with name and phone number. Call Ext. 7386 for more information.

Monday special

Families of deployed members can bowl on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for only \$1 a game. Call the bowling center at Ext. 7487 for more information.

Color pin bowling

Bowl a strike with color pin on the head pin and win a free game coupon or a snack bar discount every Friday night after league. Call the Bowling center at Ext. 7487 for more information.